



COUNCILMEMBER BENJAMIN HUESO
CITY OF SAN DIEGO – COUNCIL DISTRICT 8
Press Release

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**OWNER OF SAN YSIDRO MOTOR MOTEL
THAT WAS ONCE INFESTED WITH RATS
SETTLES A CIVIL COMPLAINT WITH THE CITY**
City Attorney's Office settles case involving nuisance activity and numerous code violations

The owner of the Valli-Hi Motor Motel in San Ysidro, whose property was once infested with rats, will pay a fine and relocate motel guests as part of a civil settlement that was brought by the San Diego City Attorney's Office. Ing-Wen Hwang has owned the motel for fourteen years. Poor property management, combined with years of deferred maintenance and neglect, resulted in fire code and electrical violations, infestation of rats, and substandard conditions in the rooms.

"Since taking office, the motel had become a high priority for my district," said Councilman Ben Hueso. "Due to the constant nuisance activity in and around the premises, the Police Department received numerous calls. It is my hope that the residents of Valli-Hi will begin to feel safe in their own homes," he added.

The case was prosecuted by City Attorney's Code Enforcement Unit. This Code Enforcement Unit was established in 1984 to address nuisance properties and blight throughout San Diego. The Unit works in partnership with the City's Neighborhood Code Compliance Department, the San Diego Police Department, and the community to identify and aggressively address nuisance properties.

According to Deputy City Attorney Diane Silva-Martinez, the settlement requires the owner to immediately deposit \$55,000 in a trust account to relocate approximately 35 long term residents at the Valli-Hi, which is located at 655 W. San Ysidro Avenue. By law, the maximum number of days a motel guest is allowed to stay at a motel is 30 days. Some residents have been residing at the 100-room motel for more than ten years.

Lack of security and failure to properly screen motel guests over the past year, resulted in numerous calls for Police assistance.

In addition to correcting all code violations, other terms of the settlement require the owner to:

- Immediately hire a state licensed, uniformed security officer to patrol the property from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. daily.

- Pay \$225,000 in civil penalties (\$150,000 is suspended pending compliance with all code violations).

- Pay investigative costs to the City of San Diego in the amount of \$13,368.

Work with the Police Department to properly screen all residents and improve property management.

Make a \$5,000 donation to a non-profit agency in the San Ysidro area whose mission includes, but is not limited to assisting the elderly, homeless, or poor.

Substantially improve the aesthetic appearance of the property by complying with all landscaping requirements on the property required by the San Diego Municipal Code.